



February 2021 | PFLAG Council of Northern Illinois Newsletter

opendoors@pflagillinois.org

Monthly Open Doors

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HAPPY NEW YEAR 2021

Greetings PFLAG Friends!

I wish you all a very happy new year and hope that 2021 brings us all a year of health, progress and joy. I truly hope that, with your help, 2021 can be a year of positive influence and change. In that spirit, I am happy to inform you of an education initiative in Illinois and an opportunity for you to engage and help out.

Currently, only 30 states require educational instruction about personal health and safety. Sadly, Illinois is not among those states. We believe that our youth deserve better. So, we are pleased to say that the PFLAG Council of Northern Illinois (PCNI) has joined in with over 30 other organizations in support of the The Responsible Education for Adolescent and Children's Health Act (REACH) Act, which will require age-appropriate, comprehensive, and inclusive personal health and safety education to be taught in public schools in grades K-12.

There are many ways you can help support this initiative:

- 1) Learn more about the REACH Act. Be sure to check out the REACH Act fact sheet below. PCNI is also pleased to be co-hosting with Planned Parenthood of Illinois to provide a **"Policy Deep Dive Session on the REACH Act" on Tuesday, February 9th at 5:30pm.** Registration link for the Feb 9th Session: bit.ly/ActivistU-5
- 2) Learn how to lobby your state legislators. Below is a Tip Sheet for an effective meeting with your public official. Also, don't miss the opportunity to participate in the Planned Parenthood **"Virtual Lobby Day" on March 2nd at 9 am.** Click [here](#) to sign up and learn more about other educational opportunities. bit.ly/ActivistU
In addition, Mike Ziri, Director of Policy at Eq IL has agreed to host a special PFLAG session for **"How to Contact and Communicate with your Elected Officials" on Monday, March 8th at 7 pm.** Sign up here to participate: <http://bit.ly/PFLAG-EQIL>

- 3) Sign the petition in support of this bill. Here is the link to sign: [Petition link](#)
- 4) Do what PFLAG people do best, Tell Your Story. One thing that we have learned is that everyone has a story when it comes to how they learned sex ed. Some stories are funny, some people weren't given any kind of sex education, and some stories lead to long term harm. Whatever your story, wherever you live - you can help change the conversation on sex education and help us pass the Illinois REACH Act so that we can equip the next generation with the information that they need to have healthy relationships and to stay safe. Sign on to tell your story at this link: [Storytelling link](#)



I hope you will join us in supporting this initiative by getting informed, signing the petition, sharing your story, and letting your legislators know that you support the REACH Act. The children of Illinois deserve comprehensive, inclusive health and safety education. Stay tuned for future updates and information. You can also sign up to stay informed via email from our partners [Planned Parenthood of Illinois](#) and [Equality Illinois](#) (click these links).

Warmest wishes,

John

John Hickey

President, PFLAG Council of Northern Illinois



Stay Informed- Join our Partner Email Lists at:

- Planned Parenthood of Illinois- Click the link below and select “Sign Up for Email Alerts”:
<https://www.plannedparenthoodaction.org/planned-parenthood-illinois-action/take-action>
- Equality Illinois- Click the link below and then “Get Involved”, and then “Stay Informed”:
<https://www.equalityillinois.us/category/get-involved/>

Effective meetings with your public official:

- Are conducted in-district, where an elected official is less distracted and can offer you more time
- Involve personal stories and data
- Consist of 3-4 people. Don’t get too big or the meeting could become unwieldy and unmanageable.

Before your meeting:

- Write down what you want to say and practice.
- You don’t have to be the issue expert, but identify key data to share with the elected official
- Sketch a compelling personal story about why you support or oppose a particular policy or position.

Your personal story should:

- Connect with values
- Share something personal about your life or someone close to you
- Have a connection to the elected official or their district or community
- Make a case for the elected official to share your position on the policy item

During the Visit

- Introduce yourself.
- Try to start on a positive note by finding common ground. For example, if your legislator recently voted in support of a pro-LGBTQ issue, thank them.
- Tell a compelling personal story and support it with data. Explain how the legislation affects you, your family, or your friends; make sure legislators understand the personal ramifications or benefits resulting from their actions.
- Ask them to take a specific action, like sponsoring a bill or voting for or against a pending measure.
- Thank the legislator as you leave.

After the Visit

- Send a thank you letter to the legislator for meeting with you and to remind them of the conversation and your ask.
- Maintain ongoing communication with legislators and their staff through letters, calls, and visits.

DO

- Do feel like the expert of your own story and experiences.
- Do learn the legislators’ position and ask why they take that position.
- Do show openness to the knowledge of counterarguments and respond to them.
- Do admit when you don’t know. Offer to try to find the answer and send information to their office.
- Do spend time with legislators whose position is opposite ours. You can decrease the intensity of the opposition and perhaps change it.
- Do spend time in developing relationships with the legislative staff.

DON’T

- Don’t feel like you have to be the policy expert on an issue.
- Don’t overload a legislative visit with too many issues.
- Don’t confront, threaten, pressure, or beg.
- Don’t be argumentative. Speak with calmness and commitment so as not to put the legislator on the defensive.
- Don’t expect members to be specialists.
- Don’t make promises you can’t deliver.
- Don’t be afraid to take a stand on the issues.
- Don’t shy away from meetings with legislators with known views opposite your own.
- Don’t be offended if a legislator is unable to meet and requests that you meet with their staff.

Support the REACH Act

Sen. Villivalam & Rep. Willis

30 states require instruction about personal health and safety. But not Illinois. Students in Illinois public schools deserve better.



The **Responsible Education for Adolescent and Children's Health Act (REACH Act)** will require age-appropriate, comprehensive, and inclusive personal health and safety education to be taught in public schools, grades K-12.

- **REACH Act instruction must be tailored to grade ranges to ensure that it is age and developmentally appropriate.**

Grades K-2
Personal safety, identifying trusted adults, and respecting others

Grades 3-5
Personal safety and healthy relationships, bullying prevention, harassment, abuse, anatomy, puberty, hygiene, body image, sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression

Grades 6-12
Builds on prior instruction about healthy relationships and covers issues like consent, sexual harassment, inter-personal violence, the benefits of abstinence, pregnancy prevention, and sexually transmitted infection prevention

- The REACH Act sets a multi-year approach for implementation, thereby providing public schools with adequate time to implement quality programs.
- The REACH Act respects local control by allowing school districts to select their own curriculum and materials (consistent with the law) and decide the grades and amount of time instruction.
- Parents retain the right to remove their child from REACH Act instruction.



Support the REACH Act

Sen. Villivalam & Rep. Willis

- **REACH Act instruction shall:**
 - address experiences and needs of all students, including those with disabilities;
 - not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, ethnicity, nation origin, disability, religion, gender expression, gender identity, or sexual orientation; and
 - allow instructors to answer questions initiated by a student that are related to and consistent with the material of the course.
- **REACH Act instruction shall not:**
 - stigmatize parenting or sexually active youth;
 - employ gender stereotypes;
 - exclude the health needs of intersex individuals or individuals of diverse sexual orientations, gender identities, or gender expressions; or
 - teach or promote any religious doctrine.

The REACH Act was proudly developed based on input from broad communities of stakeholders from across Illinois, including youth, educators, social workers, sexual and interpersonal violence prevention experts, health care providers, and advocates.

The REACH Act is Supported by:

- American Association of University Women (AAUW) Illinois
- ALPHAS (African-American Lesbian Professionals Having A Say) (Quad Cities)
- American Nurses Association Illinois
- Bolingbrook Pride
- Chicago Alliance Against Sexual Exploitation
- Chicago Children's Advocacy Center
- Chicago Teachers Union
- Citizen Action/Illinois
- Comprehensive Sex Ed Now
- Elmhurst Pride Collective
- Equality Illinois
- EverThrive Illinois
- Hope Clinic for Women
- Illinois Association of School Nurses
- Illinois Caucus for Adolescent Health
- Illinois Coalition Against Domestic Violence
- Illinois Coalition Against Sexual Assault
- Illinois NOW
- Illinois Public Health Association
- Illinois School Counselor Association
- Lambda Legal
- Naper Pride (Naperville)
- National Association of Social Workers – Illinois Chapter
- The Network: Advocating Against Domestic Violence
- Peer Health Exchange
- Peoria Proud
- PFLAG Council of Northern Illinois
- Phoenix Center (Springfield)
- Planned Parenthood of Illinois
- Prairie Pride Coalition (Bloomington-Normal)
- Rainbow Cafe LGBTQ Youth Center (Carbondale)
- Resilience (formerly Rape Victim Advocates)
- Uniting Pride Center of Champaign County
- The Women's Center
- YWCA Evanston/North Shore
- Youth Outlook

For more information, contact Mike Ziri, Equality Illinois, at mziri@eqil.org or Brigid Leahy, Planned Parenthood of Illinois, at brigidl@ppil.org.



Version Dec. 30, 2020

From PFLAG National

FEDERAL

In The First 100 Days of the Biden Administration, PFLAG National will pursue passage of:

- **[The Equality Act \(HR 5\)](#)** is expected to be introduced in the House in the next few weeks, with action in the Senate to follow later. PFLAG National will work to get the Equality Act passed by both chambers of the 117th Congress and signed into law by the President. The Equality Act will be the same bill text (linked above) as it was in the 116th Congress.
- **[The For the People Act \(HR 1\)](#)** has been introduced. The bill includes provisions on voting access and justice for LGBTQ+ people, other marginalized communities and our families.

PFLAG National Ongoing Federal Priorities:

- **[Ending discrimination.](#)** PFLAG National will work for the full implementation across all federal agencies' civil rights offices of SCOTUS's [Bostock decision](#).
- **[Title IX support, safety and well-being for LGBTQ+ students.](#)** PFLAG National will continue working to create comprehensive and robust guidelines for trans and nonbinary students as well as advocating for the Safe Schools Improvement Act, not yet introduced, but active in the [116th Congress](#).
- **[Data-driven response to COVID-19.](#)** PFLAG National will work to drive education and awareness of public health measures being implemented to combat COVID-19 at the national, state, and local levels. President Biden's [comprehensive COVID-19 plan](#) was rolled out on Day 2, and [many Executive Orders on Day 1](#) gave evidence-based actions to take regarding prevention, including vaccine education and access, and a mask mandate.
- **Advocating for inclusive and comprehensive healthcare.** PFLAG National will:
 - Work with the Administration to remove discrimination and allow healthcare coverage for people with pre-existing conditions in accordance with the [Affordable Care Act \(ACA\) Section 1557](#).
 - Work to end discrimination against gay and bisexual men in regards to the FDA [blood donation policy](#).
 - Advocate for the use of science-based practices in HIV and AIDS prevention, treatment, services, and research.

- **Immigration reform.** PFLAG National will work in support of an immigration system that:
 - [Welcomes immigrants and keeps families together](#);
 - Grants a pathway to citizenship for people with temporary status, including [DACA recipients](#); and
 - Delivers detention reform, focusing on Latinx and transgender people.
- **[Transgender military service.](#)** PFLAG National has consistently fought to [establish open military service for Transgender people](#), which we will advocate to establish in the First 100 Days by Executive Order. We will then work with the Administration through enactment and implementation to protect trans service members and their dependents.
- **[Reducing anti-transgender violence.](#)** PFLAG National will work to establish an interagency working group to prioritize study of and action to address the epidemic of violence and murder of transgender people, especially Black and Latina/x women and nonbinary people.
- **[LGBTQ+ Data Collection.](#)** PFLAG National will advocate for uniform federal data collection to be prioritized, inclusive of LGBTQ+ people, across federal agencies.
- **[Banning conversion therapy.](#)** PFLAG National will continue to work to prohibit the harmful practice of conversion therapy by recognizing it as consumer fraud as a business practice.

COURT

[Supreme Court rejects challenge to Oregon school district's bathroom policy.](#) SCOTUS rejected without an explanation a petition request to review a legal challenge against an Oregon school district's inclusive bathroom policy. Parents for Privacy v. Barr challenged the policy at Dallas School District No. 2, a public school district in Pole County in western Oregon.

[Federal judge orders funeral home to pay a \\$250,000 settlement following landmark Bostock decision.](#) Under the [consent decree](#), Harris Funeral Homes in Michigan must pay \$130,000 to plaintiff Aimee Stephens' spouse and widow, Donna Stephens, for back pay, interest and compensatory damages. The other \$120,000 goes to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) in attorney fees.



From PFLAG National – continued

Federal judge rules challenging gender identity on U.S. Passport unconstitutional. U.S. District Court Judge Gloria M. Navarro [in her ruling](#) granted a transgender man a U.S. passport, saying the government violated his Fifth Amendment rights.

Federal appeals court strikes down two municipal conversion therapy ban laws as violations of free speech. The ruling issued a major blow against bans on conversion therapy for youth, setting up a split within the judiciary that could lead the U.S. Supreme Court to adjudicate the issue on a nationwide basis. In a [2-1 decision](#), the U.S. Eleventh Circuit Court of Appeals determined municipal bans on conversion therapy for youth in the cities of Boca Raton and Palm Beach in Florida contravene the freedom of speech under the First Amendment.

Thanks to SCOTUS Bostock decision, lesbian couple in Missouri settle lawsuit brought against retirement community that refused to let them live there. The lawsuit filed by Mary Walsh and Bev Nance, together since 1978, was initially dismissed on the grounds that LGBTQ+ people aren't protected by the Fair Housing Act.

MEDIA

Actor Elliot Page comes out as transgender and nonbinary. Page, who had his breakout role in 2007's *Juno*, has since played roles in *X Men* and currently stars in the popular series *The Umbrella Academy*, where he will continue his role. Our friends at GLAAD sent out the release, and also shared [a helpful dos-and-don'ts resource for media and others regarding how to report on the news.](#)

Margot Robbie reportedly wants her Pirates of the Caribbean character to be LGBTQ+. The actress has shared that she wants to make the swashbuckling blockbuster even more progressive by portraying her character as LGBTQ+.

The Out100 list is announced, most diverse in its history. The list is the largest annual portfolio recognizing members of the LGBTQ+ community for groundbreaking and culture-shifting impact. [This year's honorees](#) span generations including music's rising stars, a WWII U.S. fighter pilot, activists, athletes, writers, CEOs and others.

LINKS

Collected by Toni Weaver

- [CDC: LGBT Youth Resources](#)



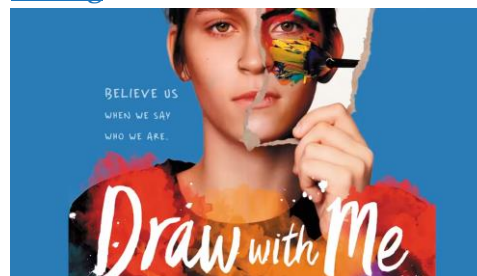
- aces and aros: [A link to information about Aromantic orientation.](#)



- IT GETS BETTER PROJECT: [Finding the Right Words: LGBTQ+ Glossary](#)

IT GETS BETTER PROJECT. 10

- [Instagram: Video by Jennifer Lopez about her nibbling.](#)



- [PFLAG National and Oreo cookies teamed up to produce this short, heartwarming video.](#)



News from PFLAG Oak Park

by Nancy Johnson

We had a great meeting on Sunday! Our guest was Ghirlandi Guidetti, staff attorney at ACLU Chicago. He's in charge of LGBTQ matters. He gave us an interesting and informative recap of the court decisions related to LGBTQ rights starting with "The Children's Hour", a play by Lillian Hellman, which was censored for "lesbian content" in the 1930s. The case was lost in court, but there was a public outcry in favor of the performance. This was good, because it helped set a social standard of what was decent, and the play was decent! To hear for yourselves this speaker, you can contact him here:

Ghirlandi Guidetti
Pronouns: he/him/his
Staff Attorney
ACLU of Illinois
150 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 600
Chicago, IL 60601
(312) 201-9740 x319
gguidetti@aclu-il.org

Here are links to some videos that he wasn't able to show us via ZOOM. They're related to several big good court decisions:

1. Edie Windsor and the ACLU Challenge the Defense of Marriage Act: <https://youtu.be/XanBELg6ZME>
2. Fired for Being Trans: Celebs Read from Letter that Led to SCOTUS Case: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ObHjoAmvN5k>
3. "I'm Ecstatic;" See reaction to the District 211 board of education vote to allow unrestricted locker room access with respect to gender: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BG-9IfXtRgY>

Our fundraising with the **Love is Love** masks has been going well. Phil reported that we've made about \$100. Our local LGBT organization (OPALGA+) has helped us by posting on their Facebook page. Several have bought the masks to support us. Michelle Mascaro has put a flier in her shop, The Happy Apple.

We enjoyed having a speaker a lot. We're going to try to have more ZOOM speakers this year, but haven't scheduled anyone yet.

News from PFLAG McHenry

by Toni Weaver

Life is pretty quiet out here in McHenry County. We elected to take the month of January off; however, three of us from the chapter attended PFLAG Deerfield's meeting and thoroughly enjoyed! That is the beauty of Zoom, the ability to participate in other meetings, meeting new people and getting new ideas. Thanks, Deerfield, for your hospitality.

Ghirlandi Guidetti will be the guest speaker at the February 9th meeting with the presentation *What's next in LGBTQ+ advocacy*. The February meeting would also be ideally suited for a telling of LGBTQ+ love stories, and you don't have to be a member of PFLAG McHenry to tell your story. If you'd like to share it with us, please email me at twweaver@earthlink.net.

I was introduced to a marvelous book by one of our local GSA advisers/school counselors: **Beyond Magenta – Transgender Teens Speak Out**, written and photographed by Susan Kuklin. Five transgender/gender non-conforming teens share their stories, their struggles, their advice, and their insights. One of the young persons, Luke, expressed his feelings in a poem during the time he was struggling to figure out his gender identity:

*Said, 'What are you?' said, 'you gotta choose'
Said, 'Pink or blue?'
And I said I'm a real nice color of
Magenta*

News from PTI McHenry

by Andrew Zanevsky

We continue meeting over Zoom on the 4th Wednesday of every month, at 7-9 pm. All parents and other family members of transgender, non-binary, and gender diverse individuals are welcome to join. If you are *not* on the PTI McHenry mailing list, please email opendoors@pflagillinois.org to receive a meeting link and password.

Share your story with OpenDoors:
opendoors@pflagillinois.org



News from PTI Chicago

by Christine Peters

PTI Chicago held its January monthly meeting on Thursday, 1/14/2021 via Zoom. We also invited the members of PTI North Shore and PTI McHenry to participate. We especially welcome newcomers and are glad when they find us.

Our Book Club got off to a good start with 10 parents discussing our first selection, *Beyond the Gender Binary* by Alok Vaid-Menon. We began by looking at ourselves as having been steeped in the compulsory binary system. It's especially important for cis and straight folks to examine how this has conditioned them to conform to gender roles and to hold gendered expectations. We discussed the consequences when we each had broken gender rules at some point in our lives. Imagine the harassment and discrimination faced by gender non-conforming people who are outside the binary paradigm altogether!

Consider reading this interview with Alok, wherein they say, "I feel most joyous with a beard, a full face of makeup, lipstick, and a miniskirt. And that's just where I feel the most me. And I think that feelings for me as an artist are so much more poignant than words. And so it's less about 'I'm trans' or 'I'm a woman' and it's more about, 'I feel good.'

<https://www.advocate.com/transgender/2020/6/16/writer-alok-vaid-menon-what-feminine-part-yourself-did-you-kill>

Our next Zoom meeting will be on Thursday, February 11, 2021 from 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. May we suggest you wear red or pink in anticipation of Valentine's Day? Members will receive an e-mail the weekend before the meeting with the Zoom link and password to enter the meeting. Parent/s or family members of transgender, non-binary or gender non-conforming individuals who would like to join us for the first time should e-mail PTI Chicago President Bill Guilfoile at bill.guilfoile@gmail.com



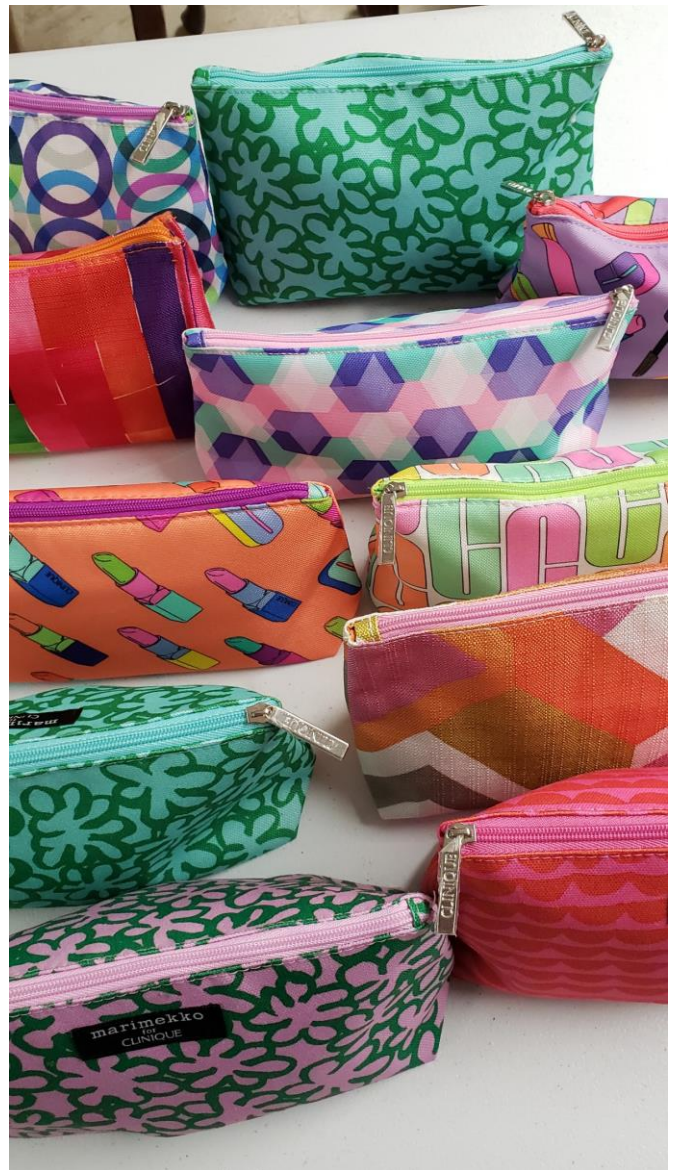
News from PFLAG Hinsdale - December

by Barb Medley

For many years, PFLAG Hinsdale has been collecting toiletries, cold weather accessories and gift cards, which we stuff into stockings made for us and then donate to The Crib, part of the Night Ministry. Unfortunately this year we couldn't fill the stockings at our December holiday potluck as usual. Jackie Frett took the lead and collected the donations, filled the 30 stockings and delivered to The Crib. Her granddaughter and friends did a Go Fund me and filled 20 more. Someone also donated the cute little bags, an extra bonus. Happily, an event that means so much to our chapter went forward despite the pandemic!



Click [here](#)
to access
The Crib -
housing for
homeless
young
adults



News from PFLAG Hinsdale -

January

by **Marcia Prichason**

Hinsdale PFLAG's New Year's meeting featured speaker Joanne Despotes, who received her BA in Nursing from the University of Illinois. Joanne was the Nurse involved in the original 1980's placebo-controlled AZT drug trial to combat AIDS/HIV in Chicago. As part of the only Midwest team to research this at-the-time revolutionary drug, Joanne experienced a lot of progress and a lot of emotional pain. While the research demonstrated that the new drug slowed down the progress of AIDS, it also exhibited that it did not reverse it. Joanne recalled that the learning curve, both for herself and the entire team was steep, but steeper still was the acquisition of knowledge about HIV, AIDS, and the efficacy of drugs to combat the then deadly illness. Joanne stated that, while she was deeply involved in the clinical aspects of the trial, she saw herself as one who provided hope to those suffering from the ravages of the disease. At that time, being gay and, additionally, being afflicted with AIDS, was compounded by self-negativity, the fear the general population had about AIDS, and the bigotry and discrimination that was the status quo at that time. Despite all the challenges of participating in a unique and innovative clinical research trial, Joanne says her life was forever altered for the better. She was enriched by the experience, made life-long friends, and felt she was given the precious gift of learning about the gay community. Joanne also had the honor of being featured on the cover of "Nursing Life" in 1987 and in People magazine of the same year.

Nancy Mullen, Carrie Noe and other members from the Youth Outlook staff will give us a modified version of their "tour" at our next meeting on February 7th.

Dear PFLAG Families!

Most of the PFLAG Council of Northern Illinois chapters are meeting on Zoom, one chapter is meeting in person, and some chapters have suspended meetings until the pandemic ends. **Details are on the map on the last page of this issue.**

All PFLAG chapters meeting on Zoom admit members of other chapters as well as any newcomers.

PTI (Parents of Transgender Individuals) chapters admit all parents and immediate caregivers of transgender individuals.

While the pandemic has disrupted our interaction in person, it has also created an opportunity to expand our circle of connections over Zoom calls, meet new friends, hear new stories, virtually travel to places that you would not visit in person because they are too far. **Consider joining a different chapter for their monthly call** – email the chapter using the address on the last page of the issue to receive Zoom call information.

Email opendoors@pflagillinois.org if you have any questions.



News from PFLAG Deerfield

by Jodi Zavos

PFLAG Deerfield is thriving on Zoom. Several new people, and many familiar faces attended the January meeting. We even welcomed members of PFLAG McHenry! Please remember all are welcome! Our meetings are every 2nd Thursday of the month at 7:15 pm. Join us!

Our speaker this month was Jameson Pagano, MA, LCPC, of Partners In Pride Wellness Center. Partners in Pride offers outpatient mental health counseling, support groups, and peer events focused on the LGBTQIA community. Partners In Pride also provides access to the LGBT (Let's Give Back Together) Clothing Closet for those in transition.

Jameson offered professional advice as to how to best support our children as they come out and/or transition. In addition to his presentation, Jameson held an engaging question and answer session. Jameson's willingness to be open and honest with his own story was very much appreciated. As always, there is strength and wisdom in everyone's story.

News from PFLAG DuPage

**by Margaret Donahue
and Kristin Shulman**

PFLAG Dupage started its 18th Year with a January gathering on Zoom. Though many of our members express some weariness with the Zoom format, once we are together Brady Bunch style we seem to kick into gear. The one high point of virtual meeting is being able to be with people who are far away but still connected to our community. Especially exciting this month we had a speaker many of us had met at PFLAG

National in Kansas City, October 2019. Anunnaki Ray Marquez and his husband, James Bunce, joined us from Athens Georgia to explain the "I" in LGBTQIA. If you would like a YouTube highlighting this speaker follow this link:

https://www.ted.com/talks/mx_anunnaki_ray_marquez_born_intersex_we_are_human

News from PFLAG Ottawa

by Ken Brown

PFLAG Ottawa continues to meet via Zoom. In November, our guest was Len Meyer, the downstate Community Engagement Manager for Planned Parenthood. Len's region includes the Planned Parenthood office in Ottawa. Len spoke about the services Planned Parenthood offers to LGBTQ+ individuals. Len also spoke about their personal journey, and about their use of the pronouns "they, them, and their." We had fourteen people in attendance, which has been about our average attendance on Zoom.

The PFLAG Ottawa Board of Directors decided to cancel our meeting for December. We meet on the fourth Sunday of the month. Since the fourth Sunday in December fell on Christmas weekend, we decided to forego the meeting and meet again in January.

In January of this new year (the 24th), we plan to watch a PFLAG National video entitled "Don't Know Much About LGBTQ History?: The Ultimate LGBTQ History and Culture Extravaganza." The presentation is well done and very informative, and it explores LGBTQ history well before Stonewall.

We at PFLAG Ottawa hope you all are staying healthy and are enjoying some of the good things this new year is bringing us.



Snow Pride

by **Andrew Zanevsky**

As social distancing and isolation continues for many of us, we can still find creative ways to express our support of the LGBTQ+ community.

Building a snow sculpture and decorating it with your Pride accessories is a good physical exercise, fun for the whole family, and a statement for your local community. It may give someone comfort, make someone smile, and it may inspire others to make their own Snow Pride creations.

If you build a Snow Pride sculpture this winter, please photograph it and send your pictures to opendoors@pflagillinois.org. You may include real people and animals in the photo if you wish and if they don't mind. (Imaginary people and animals are also okay, if they are sufficiently photogenic.)

Sculpture: *Snow Pride Warrior*, 2020
Andrew Zanevsky



Keshet
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For LGBTQ
equality in
Jewish life

www.keshetonline.org



**Keshet works
for the full
equality of all
LGBTQ Jews
and our families
in Jewish life.**



curves

Nicole Farley

I must admit
I do not know the exact meaning
of the yin and yang symbol
(this seems highly Google-able,
as Tig says)
and I don't particularly want to.
Instead I let it be
like other works of art,
something with meaning to the viewer
beyond the artist's intent.

Two forms whose curves fit together so precisely
as to appear as one complete shape.
And you are one shade
and I am the other,
with a bit of the other in each of ourselves.
What brings you your greatest joy
is the source of the deepest grief
I have
ever
known.
Yet, that little dot of you
(inside of me)
is evidence that I have joy
in your joy

and you hold my grief
(a dot)
in your joy.

I somehow missed
all these 30 years
how much your maleness was a part of my identity
and now I cannot miss it.
You were the fiancé to my fiancée
(I remembered which was which
by the two round "e"s
like two breasts)
the husband to my wife
the father to my mother
the if-it-is-to-be-one-day grandfather to my if-it-is-to-be-one-day grandmother,
the man celebrating more milestone wedding anniversaries with the wife.

After all, we had hit our stride not so long before 25 -
what could stop us now from 40 like our parents? 50? Dare life to give us 75?

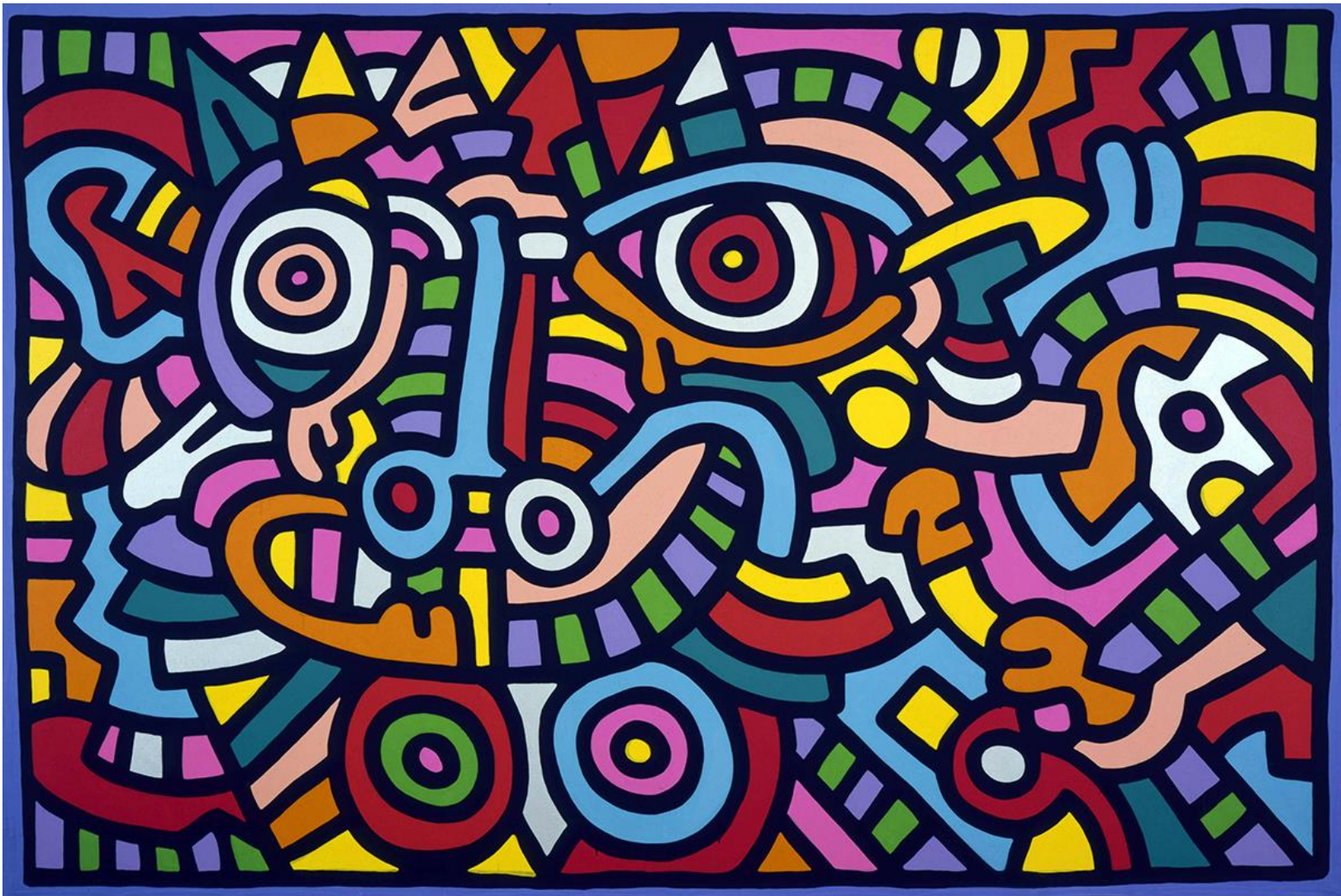
And now, as you move toward new curves,
the familiar curve of your masculine comfort
is the most familiar and most comforting thing I seek
to help me with the loss
of those very things.

The pictures of a young man and a young woman,
of a man and a woman married 25 years,
of a man and a woman watching their young man join his young woman,
that you assured me I could keep out
when I was afraid of *my* history being erased -
I need to put away for now.
I do not think I can grow to love the new face as easily
(if ease is possible, you see)
with the ghost of the old everywhere I turn.
Like the suddenly new Becky Conner,
I know there has been a change
(I haven't figured out how to like it yet)
but
eventually
I'll get used to it
and
maybe
like it even more
(sorry, Lecy Goranson).

One day
I will find
the walls of the dot
within me
have dissolved
and the colors have mixed and swirled
(like at the end of Inside Out).
For now,
today is not that day
and I am happy for you
and filled with sorrow for me.

Nicole Farley is a founding member, and the current president, of the PFLAG Grayslake / Round Lake chapter. Her spouse came out as a trans woman in March 2020 and she facilitates a Zoom-only group for Partners of Trans Folx on the third Monday of each month at 6:30 CT. There are no geographic restrictions to join and anyone interested must register to receive the Zoom link by emailing PTFZoom@gmail.com.





**Keith Haring artwork © Keith Haring Foundation, Used by Permission
Untitled, 1986, Oil and acrylic on canvas**

Keith Allen Haring

'Keith Haring' (2021). *Wikipedia*. Available at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Keith_Haring (Accessed: 26 January 2021).

Keith Allen Haring (May 4, 1958 – February 16, 1990) was an American artist whose pop art and graffiti-like work grew out of the New York City street culture of the 1980s. Much of his work includes sexual allusions that turned into social activism. He achieved this by using sexual images to advocate for safe sex and AIDS awareness.

Haring's work grew to popularity from his spontaneous drawings in New York City subways—chalk outlines of figures, dogs, and other stylized images on blank black

advertising-space backgrounds. He also created larger scale works, including colorful murals, many of them commissioned. His imagery has "become a widely recognized visual language". His later work often addressed political and societal themes—especially homosexuality and AIDS—through his own iconography.

Haring died on February 16, 1990, of AIDS-related complications. In 2014 Haring was one of the inaugural honorees in the Rainbow Honor Walk, a walk of fame in San Francisco's Castro neighborhood noting LGBTQ people who have "made significant contributions in their fields." In June 2019, Haring was one of the inaugural fifty American "pioneers, trailblazers, and heroes" inducted on the National LGBTQ Wall of Honor within the Stonewall National Monument (SNM) in New York City's Stonewall Inn.



Keith Haring artwork © Keith Haring Foundation, Used by Permission
Mom, 1989, Acrylic on canvas



📅 Begins Feb. 4 ⌚ 2:00 - 3:30 pm

Meaning-Centered Psychotherapy for LGBTQ People Diagnosed w/ Cancer

This FREE 8-week, committed group, being offered and co-facilitated jointly by Center on Halsted and Wellness House, is open to anyone who is LGBTQ+ and has had a cancer diagnosis.

📍 8-Week Virtual Therapy Group

[MORE INFO >](#)



📅 Various Dates ⌚ 6 - 8 pm

WERQ! Free Virtual Werqshops Writing a Resume, Cover Letter, and Searching for a Job

Please join us virtually for a FREE workshop series called "Getting Ready for Work". This series will cover a range of topics to help with job hunting, readiness, networking, growth, and more.

📍 Virtual Zoom Session

[RSVP HERE >](#)



THEATER

PRIDE
FILMS&PLAYS



TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 9 AT 7PM CST

SHUT UP KISS ME takes inspiration from Diana Son's **STOP KISS**, and is a love story set in the hours and days after the first date of two millennial/Gen Z women. With heart and humor, this world premiere play by Chicago native Sophia Zinger further explores what it means to find one's self and heal from past, queer trauma, within a budding relationship.

[CLICK HERE FOR TICKETS](#)



TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 16 AT 7PM CST

Five short two-character plays by Carolyn Gage, Joan Lipkin, Edwin Sánchez, and Pete Blatchford, follow lovers, besties and ex'es as they examine friendship, relationships, love, homophobia, systemic racism, and intimacy; in settings that range from a doctor's office to a church, two living rooms, and a pizza parlor.

Tickets on sale soon.

JOIN CAMP REHOBOTH LGBTQA+

YOUTH LEAD & SELECTED BOOK CLUB

THE LOVE CURSE OF MELODY MCINTYRE



BY ROBIN TALLEY

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2021, AT 6:30 P.M. (5:30 P.M. CST)

YOUTH SELECTED AND LED BY BETH S.

RECOMMENDED FOR 14+

A CAMP REHOBOTH YOUTH PROGRAM



For ZOOM meeting ID and password contact Barbara: bantlitz@camprehoboth.com



PFLAG Northern Illinois Chapters

PFLAG McHenry Meetings held 2nd Tuesday – 7 pm
Tree of Life Unitarian Church
5603 W Bull Valley Rd
McHenry 60050
pflagmchenry@pflagillinois.org

Parents of Transgender (McHenry) Meetings are held the 4th Wednesday – 7 p.m.
Tree of Life Unitarian Church
5603 W Bull Valley Rd, McHenry 60050
pflagptimchenry@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Grayslake/Round Lake Meetings held the 2nd Wednesday – 6:30 p.m.
Star Homes
783 Barron Blvd.
Grayslake, IL 60030
pflaggrayslake@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Rockford Meetings are held the 1st Monday – 6 p.m.
Rockford Public Library's Montague Branch
1238 S Winnebago St
Rockford, IL 61102
pflagrockford@pflagillinois.org

meetings suspended

Parents of Transgender (North Shore) Meetings are held the 3rd Sunday – 6 p.m.
Winnetka Presbyterian Church
1255 Willow Rd, Winnetka, IL
pflagptnorthshore@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Deerfield Meetings held 2nd Thursday – 7:15 pm
Congregation BJBE
1201 Lake Cook Rd, Deerfield 60015
pflagdeerfield@pflagillinois.org

Parents of Transgender (Chicago) Meetings are held the 2nd Thursday – 7 pm
Center on Halsted
3656 N Halsted, Chicago 60613
pflagptchicago@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG DuPage Meetings held 3rd Sunday – 2 pm
St Paul Lutheran Church
515 S Wheaton Ave, Wheaton 60187
pflagdupage@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Metro Chicago Meetings held 3rd Sunday – 2 pm
Center on Halsted (Senior Room)
3656 N Halsted, Chicago 60613
pflagchicagometro@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Aurora/Fox Valley Meetings held 2nd Sunday – 2 pm
New England Congregational Church
406 W Galena Blvd, Aurora 60506
pflagaurorafoxvalley@pflagillinois.com

PFLAG Bolingbrook Meetings held 2nd Sunday – 2 pm
305 E. Boughton Road, Bolingbrook, IL 60440
pflagbolingbrook@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Oak Park Meetings held 4th Sunday – 3 pm
First United Church
848 Lake St, Oak Park 60304
pflagoakpark@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Homer Glen / Lockport Meetings held Last Tuesday, 6:30–8 pm
Cross of Glory
14719 W. 163rd, Homer Glen, IL
pflaghgl@pflagillinois.org

meeting in-person

PFLAG Hinsdale Meetings held 1st Sunday – 2 pm
Unitarian Church Hinsdale
11 W Maple, Hinsdale 60521
pflaghinsdale@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Tinley Park Meetings held 2nd Sunday – 2-4 pm
Zion Lutheran Church
17100 69th Ave.
Tinley Park, IL 60477
pflagtinleypark@pflagillinois.org

meetings suspended

PFLAG Oak Lawn Meetings held 3rd Sunday – 2 p.m.
Pilgrim Faith UCC
9411 S 51st Ave
Oak Lawn, IL 60453
pflagoaklawn@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Ottawa Meetings held 4th Sunday - 2:30 pm
Open Table United Church of Christ
910 Columbus St., Ottawa, IL 61350
pflagottawa@pflagillinois.org

PFLAG Will, Kankakee, Iroquois
Contact Rev. Barbara Lohrbach
revlohrbach@gmail.com
plagkankakee@pflagillinois.org

- online meetings

Click anywhere on the map to open it online

